

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

SUBJECT Tube Factory at Ostrava-Kuncice

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1. In 1942 and 1943 new generators were built by the Germans behind a brickyard at Ostrava-Kuncice, and after the end of the war, a hall 300 meters long and two gas furnaces for the smelting of steel were constructed here. In June 1949 five die-pressing machines were delivered from the USSR and set up here, and later, about the middle of October, ten to fifteen Russian civilians arrived to set the machines into working condition. All of the machines except the die-pressers were of Czechoslovak or German origin.
2. These Russians were of shabby appearance and included one engineer and two foremen, while the remainder were skilled laborers. Although their arrival was official and there was a welcoming celebration, the contact of the Russians with the other workers was very limited, and even the location of their billets was unknown to the Czech workers. The wages of the Russians were set high, and some of them were engaged in the black market, selling Russian cigarettes as high as 6 Kcs. apiece.
3. About 10 November 1949, a test in manufacturing tubes of large diameter started. These tests were to be completed by the end of 1949, and beginning 1 January 1950 actual production was to start. Although at this time about 300 persons were employed here getting the factory ready, of whom 70 were prisoners from the forced labor camp at Vitkovice (unlocated) only 100 persons were to be employed in full production.

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